

February 23, 2012

Phil Isenberg, Chair
Delta Stewardship Council
980 Ninth Street, Ste 1500
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Phil:

At the last Delta Stewardship Council meeting, there were several questions and comments regarding how much Delta farmland could be lost in the future due to the urban expansion of the City of Stockton. The Economic Sustainability Plan (ESP) used a projection that 26,625 acres of Delta farmland currently in production would be urbanized by 2050. At the meeting, I was not able to tell you the proportion of that total attributable to Stockton, but have now compiled the data.

Urban expansion of Stockton accounts for 6,757 of 26,625 acres, about 25% of the total urbanization projected in the ESP. This includes 4,382 acres within the current city limits and sphere of influence on the northwest side, mostly Shima Tract and the undeveloped area around Eight Mile Road. The other 2,375 acres are on the south side between I-5 and the San Joaquin River, an area that is outside the City's sphere of influence but within the City of Stockton's 2035 General Plan area.

It should be emphasized that the 26,625 acres identified in Figure 23 of the ESP is not based on any plan or policy proposal, but was based on a UC-Berkeley projection. Our intent was to give a high-level estimate of the potential impact of urbanization on Delta agricultural output and put its potential agricultural impact in context with other changes considered for the Delta, not identify specific areas that should or should not be urbanized.

The urbanization projection in the agriculture chapter of the ESP includes areas outside the current sphere of influence of Delta cities. Table 6-1 of the Delta Plan EIR shows 18,230 acres of the legal Delta outside incorporated city limits but within cities' sphere of influence of which 7,930 acres (43%) is in Stockton's sphere of influence. The Delta acreage within Stockton's sphere of influence includes significant acreage on Wright-Elmwood Tract that is not designated for urbanization, but is shown as a future park on the City's General Plan, State Parks' Recreation Plan, and the ESP.

I hope this helps clarify the discussion. Thank you for your considerable time and attention at meetings of the Delta Stewardship Council.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey A. Michael, Ph.D.

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